

# Invasive Plant Ban

## **The News!**

As of January 1, 2006 the Massachusetts Department of Agriculture has banned the importation, sale and distribution of over 140 plants that are to be considered noxious or invasive in Massachusetts.

## **Background Information**

Invasive species are considered the second greatest threat to native biodiversity. A recent study found that of 81 rare plants in New England, 37% of their populations are threatened by invasive species, and 42% of federally listed endangered plants are threatened by invasive species. Many of these invasive species are spread by the aquarium and garden trade when they accidentally escape cultivation. Following in the footsteps of New Hampshire, which launched their plant ban in 2004, Massachusetts developed the 2006 state plant ban in a effort to protect the Commonwealth's biodiversity and to promote native alternatives.

## **Banned Aquatic Species**

Ambulia (*Limnophila sessiliflora*)

Anchored Water Hyacinth (*Eichhornia azurea*)

Arrowhead (*Sagittaria sagittifolia*)

Brazilian Waterweed (*Egeria densa*) (*Anacharis*)

Chinese Water Spinach (*Ipomoea aquatica* Forsk.)

Common Reed (*Phragmites australis*)

Curly Pondweed (*Potamogeton crispus*)

Eurasian milfoil (*Myriophyllum spicatum*)

European Naiad (*Najas minor*)

Exotic Burreed (*Sparganium erectum*)

Fanwort (*Cabomba caroliniana*)

Giant Salvinia (*Salvinia* sp. 4 species)

Hydrilla (*Hydrilla verticillata*)

Miramar Weed (*Hygrophila polysperma*)

Oxygen Weed (*Lagarosiphon major*)

Parrot Feather (*Myriophyllum aquaticum*)

Purple Loosestrife (*Lythrum salicaria*)

Variable Milfoil (*Myriophyllum heterophyllum*)

Water Chestnut (*Trapa natans*)

Water Yellow Cress (*Rorippa amphibia*)

Yellow Floating Heart (*Nymphoides peltata*)

Yellow Iris (*Iris pseudacorus*)

### **How were these plants chosen?**

During the past three years, the Massachusetts Invasive Plant Advisory Group (MIPAG) developed specific criteria to determine if the proposed plants were Invasive, Likely Invasive or Potentially Invasive. The research and plant evaluations prepared by MIPAG members were important when deciding which species would be included in the state plant ban. MIPAG members represent a diverse and voluntary collaboration between leading state scientists, federal and state agencies, land trusts, nurseries and landscape associations, land managers, and scientific and academic institutions.

### **How will the ban be enforced?**

As of January 1, 2006 it is illegal for pet stores to sell any of the banned plants, although several terrestrial species have been granted a “phase out” period to allow retailers to sell existing stock and avoid economic loss. The ban will not affect existing plantings. If a retailer is caught selling these species, the plants may be confiscated or repeat offenders may be fined \$1000.00.

### **For more information...**

Contact the Department of Agricultural Resources at 617-626-1700 or visit their website.